



Customer Success Story: Nottingham University

Overview

If you think it's hard getting a job, try orchestrating all the manual processes required to advertise one.

That is what faced the University of Nottingham. One of the largest campuses in the UK, the school has 5,000 employees and more than 28,000 students when including its sister campus in Malaysia. The school processes approximately 1,200 'Authority to Fill a Post' (AFP) per year, which need to be approved prior to an open staff position being advertised.

Challenge

With the paper-based system, departments would forward an AFP to finance for budget allocation, and then pass it to personnel for comments before receiving final approval to advertise it. Incomplete and misdirected forms, and staff absences all caused delays in the process, requiring the originator of the request to spend extra time checking with finance and personnel department staff to keep the process moving.

Solution

The University worked with Business Process Management (BPM) supplier Metastorm to develop an automated AFP process. The new system allows management and staff to initiate and track the status of requests throughout the process. It runs on the school's Microsoft NT Server, and integrates with the SQL Server 7 database. It also uses the Novell Directory Structure tree from Metastorm partner Novell, and is integrated with the Novell GroupWise email client to send automated alerts and approval confirmation.

The Web-based solution allows users to complete an electronic form, which is then routed for approval depending upon the nature of the request. The AFP pops up in users' To-Do lists when they log on to Novell GroupWise, and the originator

Highlights

Education

Processes Enabled:

- Authority to Fill a Post (AFP)

Customer Benefits & Results:

- Time spent on paper-based administration reduced
- Staff able to focus on core tasks
- AFP processing time reduced by 80%
- Resources optimized

is classified as the Watcher. With a three-day deadline for each stage, the Watcher is automatically notified when a bottleneck occurs so they can pinpoint and fix the problem. The Watcher can check the Notes section for any comments made by users in the process, such as budget considerations or deadline constraints. For users who are away from the office, the system can be accessed via the Web to prevent delays in the process.

Results

The biggest benefit to Nottingham is that time spent on paper-based administration is reduced, allowing its staff to focus on core tasks: preparing for lectures, teaching and assisting students. It also prevents staff members from taking on additional tasks while a position is vacant.

This system, with internal processes defined by the users themselves, has reduced AFP processing time at Nottingham by 80 percent: the fastest AFP posting, from being raised to final approval, is one hour and 31 minutes.

"Educational institutions are being run like businesses," said Mike Polak, senior IT support officer at the University. "We are a £250 million global business, and by addressing time-critical processes, we are in a better position to optimize resources and focus on our core business."

1-877-321-META (6382)
+44 (0) 208-971-1500
www.metastorm.com

© Copyright 2006-2007, Metastorm Inc. All rights reserved. Metastorm BPM, Enterprise Process Advantage and Process Pod are either trademarks or registered trademarks of Metastorm Inc. Other product, service and company names mentioned herein are for identification purposes only and may be trademarks of their respective owners.